STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

February 26, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michigan State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman

SUBJECT: Approval of the 2012-2013 Annual Legislative Report for School
            Improvement Plans

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has completed the annual review of
School Improvement Plans (SIPs) as required by Section 380.1277 of the Michigan
Revised School Code. The Office of Education Improvement and Innovation (OEII)
collaborated with the Office of Evaluation, Strategic Research, and Accountability to
draw random samples of schools statewide for the SIP review process. Each
sample's demographic averages were compared to Michigan's public school
population. Once the single most representative sample was identified and every
sample tested had an equal proportion of schools from each district as did the
population, OEII used the random sample of 147 schools in over 800 districts for its
2012-2013 SIP review process. The 2012-2013 random sample is representative of
all public schools statewide.

This review of SIPs focused on the goals, activities, objectives, and strategies
sections. As noted previously, this report is completed in compliance with Section
380.1277, which requires the State Board of Education to submit school
improvement activities to the Senate and House Committees that have the
responsibility for education legislation.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the 2012-2013
Annual Legislative Report for School Improvement Plans, as attached, and submit
the report to the Senate and House Committees on Education.

Attachment

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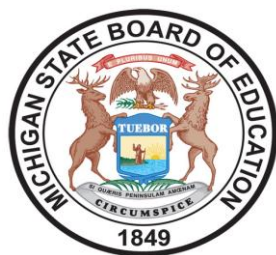www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

March 2014

2012-2013 State Board of Education Report to the Legislature

School Improvement Plans

Office of Education Improvement and Innovation

School Improvement Support Unit

State Board of Education
Report to the Legislature
School Improvement Plans

Michigan's School Improvement Planning

Michigan's Continuous School Improvement (MI CSI) process provides the foundation to address school improvement and promote student achievement through a comprehensive and systemic approach consisting of the following main tasks:

1. Gather - Collect Data and Build School Profile
2. Study - Analyze Data, Set Goals and Objectives
3. Plan - Develop an Improvement Plan
4. Do - Implement, Monitor, and Evaluate this Plan
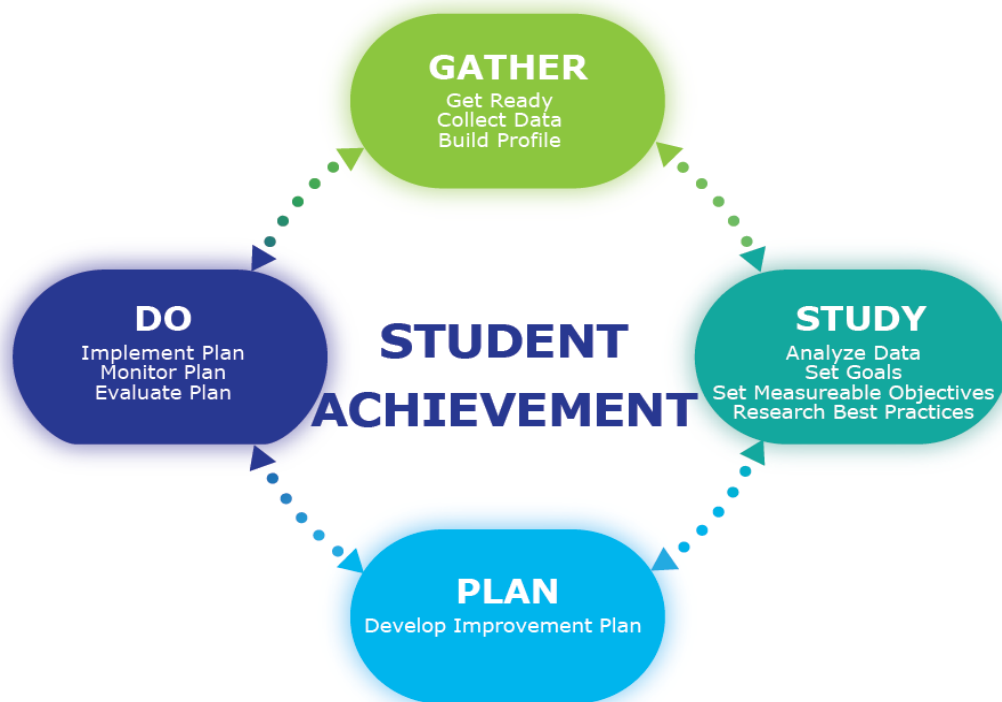
During both Study and Plan in the MI CSI cycle, schools engage in Goals Management work. These areas of Goals Management are the parts of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) that directly impact teaching and learning at the classroom level. Determining the degree of alignment with the criteria for strong Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Activities will provide information on the presence/absence of the elements of a planning process that is capable of guiding real change in schools – whether that change is rapid and transformational (as required for Priority Schools) or reflective and incremental (for mainstream Michigan schools). The results of the evaluations of these plans will help the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) provide support in the School Improvement Planning Process to all schools in the state.

History and Legislative Updates

SIPs have been required in Michigan since 1990. Section 380.1277 of the Michigan Revised School Code requires all schools in the state to update and submit SIPs every year. The MDE collects the report through the AdvancED website (www.advanc-ed.org/mde) by September 1st every year. In 2010, the legislature

prescribed additional planning requirements for Persistently Low Achieving (PLA) schools in the state's bottom 5 percent on the Top-to-Bottom rankings (TTB). Today, PLAs are known as Priority Schools and have additional planning responsibilities.

During the 2011-2012 SIP review process, Priority Schools became the first subset of schools to have their SIPs assessed. The report summarized the following key findings from the 111 Priority Schools during the 2011-2012 school year.

Overview
- 36 schools included objectives in their plans that met all five (5) of the *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-bound, and Time-bound* (S.M.A.R.T) criteria.
- 28 schools did not include measureable objectives that met S.M.A.R.T. criteria.
- 47 schools included at least some measureable objectives that met S.M.A.R.T criteria.

Goals
- 84 percent of the goals addressed 3 or more content areas.
- 3 to 8 goals were included in SIPs with an average of 4.8 goals per school.
- 84 of the Priority Schools developed goals all of which met the criteria[1] while 2 schools set no goals meeting the criteria.
- The remaining 25 or 23 percent of Priority Schools were partially successful in meeting goal criteria.
- Overall, 86 percent of goals in all of the SIPs met the criteria.
- 94 or 85 percent of the Priority Schools wrote their goals so that the plan as a whole addressed 3 or more content areas. These schools are working in a cross-disciplinary way and planning beyond English Language Arts (ELA) and math.

Measureable Objectives
- SIPs included 3 to 19 measurable objectives with an average of 5 in each plan.
- 36 of the schools wrote measurable objectives all of which met all 5 of the S.M.A.R.T criteria while 28 or 25 percent of the schools wrote no measurable objectives that met the criteria.
- The balance of 47 or 42 percent of schools met at least some of the criteria in their measurable objectives.

Strategies
- 3 to 40 strategies were included per school with an average number of 11.
- 29 or 26 percent of the schools wrote strategies which met all of the criteria.
- 70 or 63 percent of schools met the criteria for some of their strategies and 12 or 10 percent of schools did not meet the criteria with any of their strategies.
- Overall, 70 percent of the strategies across the sample met the S.M.A.R.T criteria.

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[1] For a well-designed goal it addresses an academic content area and clearly describes a level of student achievement in that content area. Of the 14 percent of goals that did not meet the criteria, these goals addressed non-content issues such as citizenship, personal accountability, and school climate.

Activities
- 80 percent of activities focus on readiness to implement and actual implementation.
- 10 percent of the distribution of activities were categorized as monitoring.
- 10-25 percent of the plans, however, failed to demonstrate a solid understanding of a significant element of the school improvement process.

Although SIPs ranged in quality and complexity, concerns were raised that the plans would not be effective because they were not adequate to meet students' needs, lacked realistic protocols to accomplish goals, or could not be implemented with fidelity due to complexity. Overall, SIPs were found to reflect only a basic understanding of the school improvement process.

To maximize efforts and reduce duplication this fall, the MDE no longer will require Priority Schools to complete a SIP after the first year of identification. This also applies to single building districts, which complete the Single Building District Improvement Plan (SBDIP). Both plans still will be required in the first year of Priority designation. In its place, the State Reform/Redesign[2] Plan will serve as the SIP/SBDIP for Priority Schools in years 2 through 4. When a school exits Priority status, it will revert back to completing an annual SIP/SBDIP.

In addition, Priority Schools receiving Title I, Part A funds still are required to complete the School-wide or Targeted Assistance Diagnostics in the AdvancED Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST) portal. In years 2-4, these are simply associated with the State Reform/Redesign Plan instead of the SIP/SBDIP.

Methodology for the Review Process
The MDE believes that without high quality goals and carefully chosen strategies, no amount of implementation or monitoring will produce improved results. The reviewers therefore addressed themselves to each of the four elements: goals, measureable objectives, strategies, and activities.

In 2013, the Office of Education Improvement & Innovation (OEII) collaborated with the Office of Evaluation, Strategic Research, and Accountability (OESRA) to draw random samples of schools statewide for the SIP review process. Each sample's demographic averages were compared to Michigan's public school population. Once the single most representative sample was identified and every sample tested had an equal proportion of schools from each district as did the population, the OEII used the random sample of 147 schools selected from over 800 districts for its 2012-2013 SIP review process. The 2013 random sample is representative of public schools statewide.

The analysis relies upon data from two sources: reviewers' evaluations and the MDEs data systems. The OEII focused on goals, measurable objectives strategies, and activities as defined below.

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[2] See Section 380.1280c of the Revised School Code.

1. **<u>Goals</u> –** These are broad statements focused on a content area shown by the school's achievement data to need improvement. An example of such a goal would be: "All students will be proficient in math."
2. **<u>Measurable Objectives</u> –**These are used to identify what students will be able to achieve in the content area goal, as measured by assessment(s) and results. Good objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, results-bound and time-bound. For example, good objectives for a math goal might be: "The percentage of students with disabilities achieving at least 85 percent on numbers and numeration items on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program will increase from 48 percent to 80 percent by the end of the 2013-2014 school year."
3. **<u>Strategies</u>** – These describe what teachers do in the classroom with students in the presence of content. Good strategies are research-based and describe observable teaching techniques. For example, a strategy chosen to achieve the math measurable objectives listed above might include teachers utilizing manipulatives while instructing the Common Core State Standards related to numbers and numeration at all grade levels.
4. *<u>Activities</u>* – This is a list of action steps that need to be done in preparation for teachers using their strategies, so that teachers are ready to use the strategy in the classroom with students and have a strong plan for implementation and monitoring. For example, activities associated with the manipulatives strategy could include focused lessons in which pattern blocks consisting of various wooden shapes and colors so students are able to see relationships among shapes.

Data and general answers to these questions were disaggregated in Excel files. Reviewers then were surveyed about the SIP process, training, the rubric's utility, and recommendations for school improvement.

<u>Statistics, Research and Summary of Findings</u>

Statistics for Michigan Schools
During the 2012-2013 academic year, more than 1.5 million public school students attended school in over 800 districts in Michigan[3]. Student outcome data for the same academic year included a 4-year graduation rate of 76.2 percent, math and reading proficiency of 37.8 percent for students in grades 3 through 8, and 18.1 percent college readiness on the American College Test (ACT).

Research
Research suggests in order to maintain an "innovative edge in the world depends importantly on developing a highly-qualified cadre of scientists and engineers, and to realize that objective requires a system of schooling that produces students with advanced math and science skills" (Hanushek, Peterson, Woessmann, 2010, p. 4). However, more than any other subject, students in Michigan continue to have the lowest proficiency rates in science. It is not a story of some kids' high performance being offset by the low performance of others, nor is it a story of immigrant, disadvantaged, or minority students hiding the good performance of better prepared students. Data confirm that comparatively small percentages of white

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[3] See MDE's *Fast Facts 2012-2013 retrieved* from
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MDE_Fast_Fact_379573_7.pdf

students in Michigan achieve at a high level. And, nationally, only a small proportion of the children of the college-educated population are equipped to compete with students in a majority of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (Hanushek, Peterson, & Woessmann, 2010, p. 5).
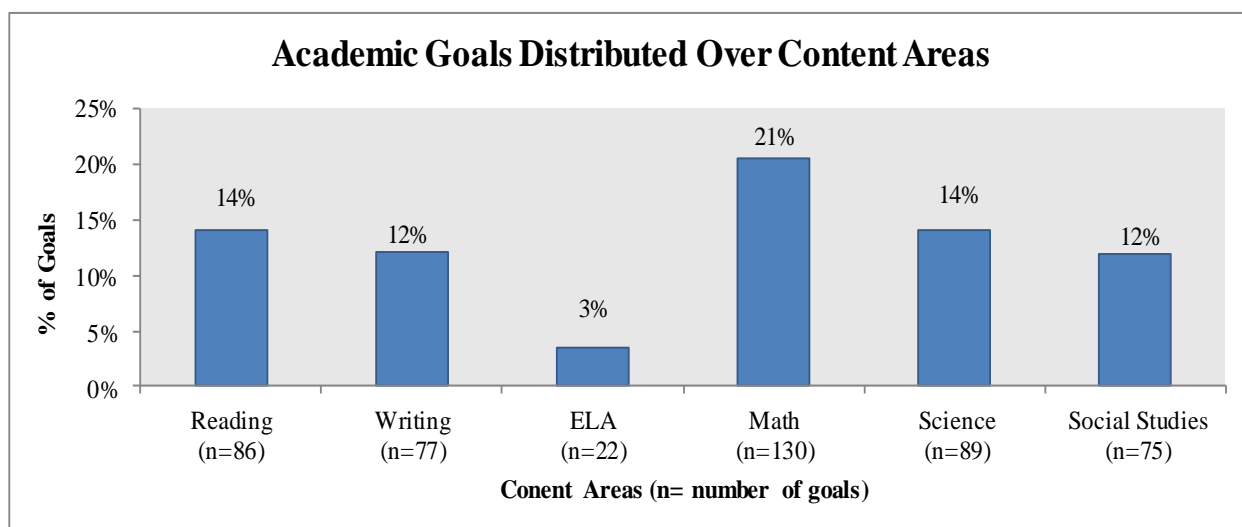
In an effort to assist public schools in identifying benchmarks that will increase the likelihood of Michiganders leaving public high schools prepared for careers and college without the need for content course remediation in college, the school improvement planning process began with goal setting followed by measureable objectives, strategies, and activities. This study begins with a discussion on goal findings.

Goals

There are two goal types: organizational and academic. Organizational goals describe building-wide structure, process, or procedures that support student achievement. Academic goals are broad statements describing what students will be able to do in a content area. Only 15 percent of goals written in the sampled SIP plans were designated as

Percent of Goals Addressed by Category

% of Category Addressed

Organizational Goals: 15%
Academic Goals: 86%

Goal Category
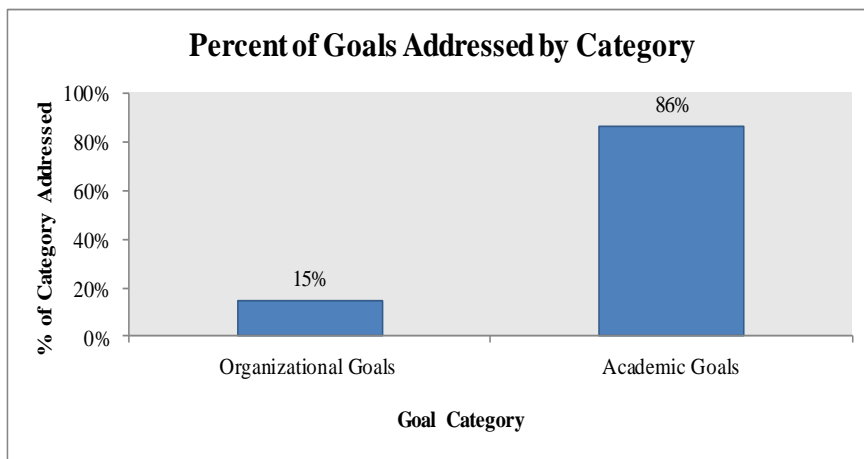
organizational and 86 percent were academic. Of the 147 schools sampled during 2012-2013, there were 634 academic and organizational goals. The largest percentages of academic goals are focused on math and English.

Academic Goals Distributed Over Content Areas

% of Goals

Reading (n=86): 14%
Writing (n=77): 12%
ELA (n=22): 3%
Math (n=130): 21%
Science (n=89): 14%
Social Studies (n=75): 12%
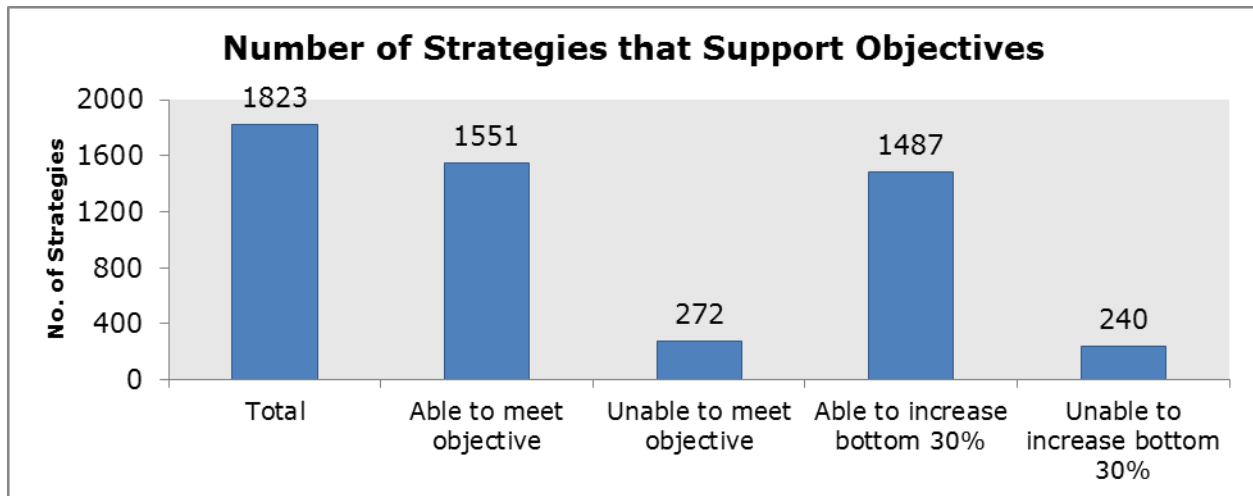
Conent Areas (n= number of goals)

Measurable Objectives

Measurable objectives are derived from the goals. A quality objective is specific, measureable, achievable, results-bound, and time-bound (S.M.A.R.T). 87 percent or 742 of the 845, measurable objectives reviewed met all five S.M.A.R.T criteria.
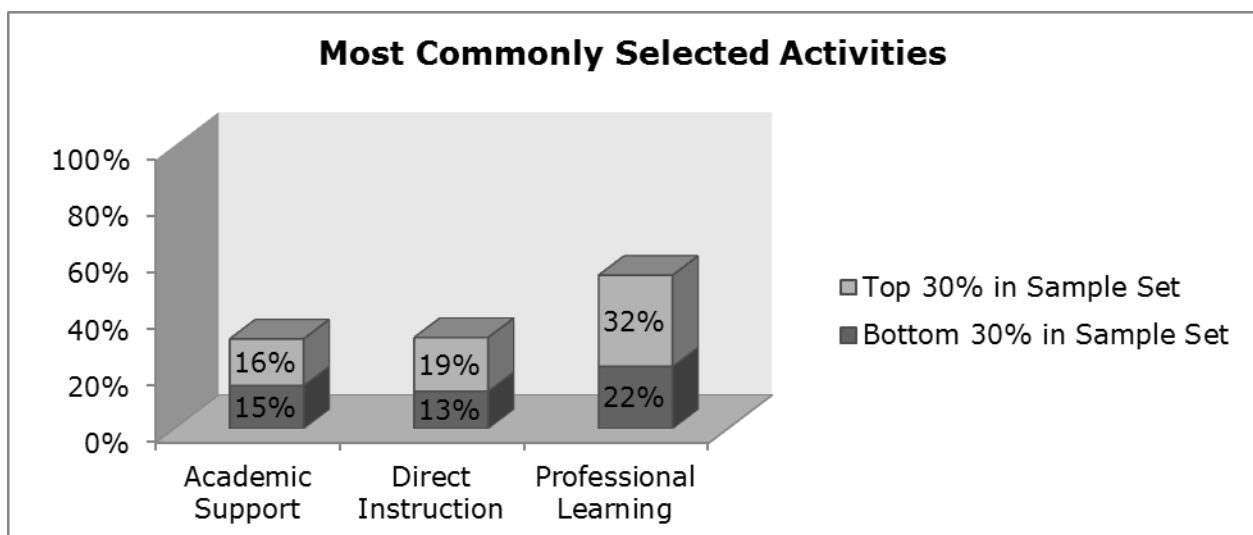
Strategies

Strategies describe "how" teachers will accomplish measurable objectives. Good strategies describe observable teaching techniques. The chart below shows the number of strategies that were likely able to meet the measurable objective or increase achievement for the bottom 30 percent subgroup. Schools in the sample wrote a total of 1,823 strategies. Reviewers confirmed 85 percent (i.e. 1,551) of strategies were able to meet objectives, while 14.9 percent (i.e. 272) of strategies were unable to meet objectives, 81.6 percent (i.e. 1,487) of strategies also were able to increase performance for the bottom 30 percent of students, and 13.2 percent (i.e. 240) of strategies were unable to increase performance for the bottom 30 percent.

Number of Strategies that Support Objectives

Category	No. of Strategies
Total	1823
Able to meet objective	1551
Unable to meet objective	272
Able to increase bottom 30%	1487
Unable to increase bottom 30%	240

Activities

Activities are both academic and organizational in nature and indicate "what" school leaders and teachers will do to ensure they have the potential to positively impact student achievement. There were a total of 4,653 activities listed to support strategies. Of those reviewed, 90 percent of activities supported strategies while 8 percent did not. The three activities most commonly selected include professional learning, direct instruction, and academic support.

Most Commonly Selected Activities

Legend:
- Top 30% in Sample Set
- Bottom 30% in Sample Set

Activity	Top 30% in Sample Set	Bottom 30% in Sample Set
Academic Support	16%	15%
Direct Instruction	19%	13%
Professional Learning	32%	22%

Conclusion

School improvement and strong student performance outcomes are largely contingent upon school leaders' ability not only to develop a SIP, but also to implement it with fidelity. This review largely focused on planned goals, objectives, strategies and activities for schools in the sample rather than on implementation. On average, the top 30 percent of schools in the sample had SIPs with 10 percent more dedicated time to the professional learning of adults than did the bottom 30 percent. This difference suggests further investigations should be conducted on the implementation of professional learning activities at the top 30 percent of public schools in Michigan.

To maintain compliance with the *Revised School Code 380.1277,* the OEII has engaged in the following efforts to assist with school improvement:

- **MI Excel** – Priority and Focus schools receive services through MI Excel, the Michigan Statewide System of Support (SSoS) and its partners to build capacity in order to increase student achievement. Through MI Excel, districts have access to in-person trainings, online toolkits, school improvement facilitators, and intervention specialists.
- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) -** MTSS is an integrated, multi-tiered system of instruction, assessment, and intervention designed to meet the achievement and behavioral health needs of all students. MTSS is meant to be embedded into the school improvement process to provide a framework for meeting the needs of all students. The principles and practices of MTSS are based upon what research has shown to be effective in both creating successful and sustainable system change, as well as what is necessary in providing the most effective instruction to all students. The MTSS framework is designed to address the academic and behavioral needs of every student, regardless of whether the students are struggling or have advanced learning needs.
- **MI-CSI** - OEII brings together various intermediate school district (ISD) personnel and MDE staff to serve as the vehicle to develop training and supports for ISD personnel and to develop training modules for local school staff. This group assists ISDs to fulfill their obligation to local school districts as provided for in Section 380.1277.
- **School Improvement Fall and Regional Spring Conferences** – OEII sponsors school improvement conferences where school culture, transformation, turnaround and instructional practices are presented by practitioners. Participants also receive a preview of forthcoming school improvement tools.
- **School Improvement Facilitators** – An independent group composed primarily of ISD personnel that meet quarterly to extend their knowledge of strategies designed to improve classroom instruction and building-level management. OEII staff coordinates this group's activities and provides one day of training and updates regarding school improvement initiatives or other areas of interest that impart school improvement.

Please direct questions related to this report to Bill Witt, Supervisor, OEII School Improvement Support Unit at WittB1@michigan.gov or 517-335-2957.

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